



NEWSLETTER



Jan. 2013

**Yuma/La Paz County
FSA Office**

**County Executive
Director**

James L. Reinertson

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Hours

Monday - Friday
7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Office Staff

James L. Reinertson
Barb Erlemann
Brenda Raney
Raney Brown

County Committee

Carmen Johannsen
Joe Martinez
David Sharp
Rodney Swan
Doug West

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Carmen Johannsen and Joe Martinez. Carmen was elected to represent farmers from Yuma on the county committee. Carmen was elected to her first term.

Joe Martinez was reelected to represent farmers from La Paz on the county committee. Joe was reelected to his second consecutive term.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members will hold their organizational meeting in January to determine who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

**2011 Supplemental Revenue Assistance
Program Applications**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to accept SURE applications for 2011 crop losses through June 7, 2013. The SURE Program provides payments to producers when crop revenues are less than the crop guarantee. The SURE Program payment is equal to 60 percent of the difference between the crop guarantee and revenue. To be eligible, the producer must have at least one crop with a 10 percent production loss.

To determine the guarantee and revenue for the SURE Program, all crops on all farms for a producer are included in the calculation. Payments under the SURE Program are limited to \$100,000.

To be eligible for the 2011 SURE Program, producers must have crop insurance on all insurable crops. For crops that are not covered

by crop insurance such as pumpkins and cucumbers, producers must have purchased Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage from FSA. The Crop Insurance and NAP purchase requirement is waived for crops that are not economically significant to the farming operation.

For more information concerning the 2011 SURE program or other Farm Service Agency programs, contact your local FSA office or visit the Farm Service Agency website at www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/.

Reporting of Fall Seeded Crops

All producers are reminded that the acreage reporting dates have **changed**:

November 15, 2012

- All Alfalfa, Bermuda (continued & newly seeded)
- Pasture grasses
- Apiculture

January 15, 2013

- Grapefruit
- Lemons
- Mandarins
- Tangelos
- Oranges

March 15, 2013

- Wheat
- Barley
- Pecans
- All other small grains

July 15, 2013

- Corn
- Cotton
- Dry beans
- All other crops

August 15, 2013

- Grain sorghum

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date.

Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verified according to agency specifications. *NAP losses must be reported within 15 days of loss.*

Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period

Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims until March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

USDA will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to inform those who may be eligible for this program.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Deadline for Claims: March 25, 2013.

Claimants can obtain a claims package in the mail by calling 1-888-509-4429 or by visiting the website www.farmerclaims.gov. Public meetings are also being held in many areas to share further information. Contact your nearest FSA office to get a schedule of meetings in your area.

Electronic News Delivery

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices have moved to a paperless news distribution system.

Producers are asked to enroll in the new *GovDelivery* system, which provides notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead of a hard copy through the mail.

FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to electronic notifications via email helps conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars. Producers can now subscribe to receive free email updates by going to www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe.

Farming Operation Changes

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. A copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchased property is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to report changes can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations. Making record changes now will save time in the spring.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should notify the county FSA office staff in person or by phone. This service is provided for office visits and any special event sponsored by FSA.

Bank Account Changes

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into a bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office when an account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases the bank where payments are sent. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to bank accounts and bank routing numbers.

Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on a request for USDA services or application, the producer will be sent a letter informing him/her of the decision and options that can be pursued.

Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency. County office staff has further details.

FSA Signature Policy

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are exceptions to the rule. Spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, contact your local FSA office.

2013 Ag Census Coming

USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service will mail the 2013 Census of Agriculture in mid-December. If you receive an Ag Census form, please complete and return it by the February 4, 2013 deadline.

Producers can easily and securely respond online after receiving their census form at www.agcensus.usda.gov. For questions or help completing the form producers can contact NASS at (888) 424-7828.

The Census of Agriculture is conducted only once every five years to accurately collect demographic information about farmers, ranchers and their operations. USDA agencies and many other institutions and organizations use the results of the Census for education, research, planning and policy-making decisions within government, as well as business, industry and academia. The use of this valuable information impacts **everyone** across our nation.

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions is required. Farmers with HEL determined soils must comply with tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not jeopardize your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

For more information on Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions, contact a FSA County Office or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that allows producers to designate another person to conduct business at the office. If interested, contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office for more information.

IRS 1099 Changes

Calendar year 2012 brought changes to the way FSA reports farm program payments to the producer and to the IRS.

In past years, IRS Forms 1099-G would be issued to show all program payments received from the Farm Service Agency, regardless of the amount.

For calendar year 2012, producers whose total reportable payments from FSA were less than \$600 will not receive IRS Form 1099-G. Also, producers who receive payments from more than one county will only receive one Form 1099-G if the total of all payments from all counties is \$600 or more.

The same changes will apply to producers and vendors who normally receive IRS Form 1099-MISC from FSA.

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Dates to Remember	
Jan. 21	FSA Offices closed, Federal Holiday
Jan 31, 2013	Last day to apply for LDP for Unshorn Lamb Pelts
January 31, 2013	Nap application closing date for Grapes, Jojoba, & Pecans
February 28, 2013	Nap application closing date for Garbanzo beans, Corn, ELS cotton, UPCN cotton, Okra.
March 25, 2013	Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period ends.
June 7	Sure applications due for 2011 losses